

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

Claims 1-8 have been canceled.

9.(Currently Amended) A method of cleaning

electrostatically bound particles from objects having generally irregular surface features, said method comprising the steps of:

providing a cleaning apparatus comprising a partially enclosed enclosure; a source of filtered downwardly directed substantially laminar flow air; and an ionizing member arranged in said partially enclosed enclosure for bombarding said objects with ions;

providing an object support member for supporting said objects for cleaning in said cleaning apparatus;

arranging said objects on said object support member with said generally irregular surface features facing so as to be exposed for cleaning;

positioning said objects on said object support member for exposure inside said partially enclosed enclosure;

directing a curtain-like stream of air across said generally irregular surface features of said objects;

ionizing said generally irregular surface features of said objects for a predetermined period of time, said step of ionizing comprising neutralizing static charges on said generally irregular surface features so as to dislodge particles electrostatically bonded on said generally irregular surface features;

continually exhausting said partially enclosed enclosure from a location below said generally irregular surface features so as to eliminate said particles dislodged from said generally irregular surface features; and,

removing said objects from said partially enclosed enclosure.

10.(Original) The method recited in claim 9 wherein said step of ionizing said generally irregular surface features comprises the step of applying a voltage to the ionizing member in the range of about 7000 volts.

11.(Original) The method recited in claim 9 wherein said step of directing a curtain-like stream of air comprises the step of filtering said curtain-like stream of air prior to the step of directing.

12.(New) A method of cleaning electrostatically bound particles from objects having generally irregular surface features, said method comprising the steps of:

B3 providing a cleaning apparatus comprising a partially enclosed enclosure; a source of filtered air; an ionizing member arranged in said partially enclosed enclosure for bombarding said objects with ions; and an exhaust system for exhausting particles cleaned from said objects;

providing an object support member for supporting said objects for cleaning in said cleaning apparatus;

arranging said objects on said object support member with said generally irregular surface features exposed for cleaning;

positioning said objects on said object support member for exposure inside said partially enclosed enclosure;

directing filtered air through said partially enclosed enclosure over said objects to said exhaust system;

producing a curtain-like stream of air;

entraining a cloud of ions from said ionizing member in said curtain-like stream of air;

directing said curtain-like stream of air with said entrained ions across said generally irregular surface features of said objects;

ionizing said generally irregular surface features of said objects for a predetermined period of time, said step of ionizing comprising neutralizing static charges on said generally irregular surface features so as to dislodge particles electrostatically bonded on said generally irregular surface features;

63 continually exhausting said partially enclosed enclosure
through said exhaust system and eliminating said particles dislodged from
said generally irregular surface features; and,
removing said objects from said partially enclosed
enclosure.
